**Things I wish I’d known**

Summary - my own teaching:

* How to show up with confidence the first class
* Get students to take responsibility for their own learning
* How to explain topics in different ways
* How to manage time efficiently
* How to communicate effectively with the students and coordinators
* Take into account students’ background (academic, expectations)
* Deal with those rare, few, annoying students (classroom management)
* How to get students to work together (break the ice)
* It is ok not to know something

Summary – course expectation:

* Exact expectations for the course and assignments
* Clear instruction on how to deliver all the material without going over time
* How the hours are broken down (marking, prep, tutorial, etc)
* Marking

**Discussion Groups**

Group 1 (tutorials)

* What the course entailed-responsibilities
* Experience teaching in front of a class – show confidence
* Be prepared for challenge, time management
* Classroom management
* Socratic questioning instead of assuming what they know (probe with questions, direct students who are behind to office hours, answer big questions by breaking them down into small ones)
* How to get students to take responsibility for their knowledge
* Start confidently form the first tutorial
* Managing differences between your knowledge/delivery strategies versus course mandated knowledge/delivery (what students should know, practicing specific teaching methods)
* Evaluating discussion on the fly
* Evaluating quality of writing

Group 2 (tutorials)

* Importance of time management
* Good communication, student feeback
* Second year students similar to first year students – concerned about correct answers, mindset expectations
* Diversity of students
* Cooperation/communication with course instructors and other TAs
* Confidence – knowledge and performance
* It is ok to say I don’t know – help guide students to correct answer

Group 3 (Tutorial)

* Quantity of marking: distribution of marking
* Attend lectures to be helpful during office hours
* Level of training expected for a particular course
* Consistency while marking
* Clear breakdown of hours teaching and marking
* TA meeting organization: time spent on each task
* Faculty/ TA interaction
* Get students comfortable/feeling safe
* It is ok to say “I don’t know”
* Asses student’s understanding in the fly
* Pose questions to students when they seek help
* Encourage interactions between students – strong learning environment
* Ask students to introduce themselves each time they answer a question
* Learn all the course material
* Dynamic classes go well

Group 4 (Lab)

* Student background
* Hours breakdown for the term
* Assignment requirements, length, etc (how much marking)
* How mentally draining teaching and marking is
* Expectation of responsibilities – should be outlined by instructors (hours, duties)
* What students are learning in lectures
* What the main concepts of the course are – ask instructor before class starts so you can refresh
* Prepare several ways to explain a concept (analogies, etc)
* Techniques for when students don’t participate – to encourage enthusiasm
* Marking is hard – make sure students know the requirements, use objective rubric

Keep consistency between TAs/yourself, have an objective rubric, recheck first marked assignments, discuss between TAs, one person marks same question, TA meeting

* Plagiarism – how to identify it? What to do when you catch this?

Talk to supervisor, make clear expectations before

Group 5 (Lab)

* All course material so we know what is coming
* How to facilitate students problem solving/discovery
* How to help students that are falling behind (facilitate at multiple levels)
* Detailed overview of what I should do, time expectations, responsibilities (in writing)

Teach, marking, exam invigilation

TA responsibility: motivating students

* More time for marking/ plan for it
* Support and understanding from supervisor: time needed to TA
* Choose a new course (not only related to TA own discipline) to learn something new
* Know more interesting things about the class to feel excited, motivated and passionate about it – share this with the students
* Instructors more transparent about the negative aspects of the course